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6	IINITED STATES	DISTRICT COURT
7	WESTERN DISTRIC	T OF WASHINGTON ATTLE
9	JACINDA DORIAN, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated,	Case No. CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
10	Plaintiff,	
11	v.	JURY DEMAND
12	AMAZON WEB SERVICES, INC., a	
13	Delaware corporation,	
1415	Defendant.	
16	Plaintiff Jacinda Dorian brings this Class	Action Complaint and Demand for Jury Trial
17	against Defendant Amazon Web Services, Inc. ('	"AWS") to put a stop to its surreptitious
18	collection, use, and storage of Plaintiff's and the proposed Class's biometric data. Plaintiff	
19	alleges as follows upon personal knowledge as to herself and her own acts and experiences, and,	
20	as to all other matters, upon information and beli	ef.
21	NATURE OF	THE ACTION
22	1. Amazon.com, Inc. ("Amazon.com	n") is the world's largest online retailer and one
23	of the largest providers of cloud computing servi	ces, called Amazon Web Services ("AWS").
24	2. According to Amazon.com, AWS	s is the world's most comprehensive and broadly
25	adopted cloud platform, offering its customers over 200 cloud-based services from data centers	
26	globally. Millions of customers—from startups to the largest enterprises—use AWS every day.	
27	3. One of AWS's services is a facial	recognition program called Amazon
	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT	CARSON NOEL PLLC 20 Sixth Avenue NE Learney Weskington 09027

exceptions under that subsection apply to this action.

trade, or otherwise obtain a person's or a customer's biometric identifiers or biometric

1 information, unless it first: 2 (1) informs the subject ... in writing that a biometric identifier or biometric information is being collected or stored; 3 (2) informs the subject . . . in writing of the specific purpose and length of term for 4 which a biometric identifier or biometric information is being collected, stored, and used: and 5 (3) receives a written release executed by the subject of the biometric identifier or 6 biometric information." 7 740 ILCS 14/15(b). 8 18. The BIPA also establishes standards for how companies must handle Illinois 9 consumers' biometric identifiers and biometric information. See, e.g., 740 ILCS 14/15(a), (c)— 10 (d). For instance, the BIPA requires companies to develop and comply with a written policy— 11 made available to the public—establishing a retention schedule and guidelines for permanently 12 destroying biometric identifiers and biometric information when the initial purpose for collecting 13 such identifiers or information has been satisfied or within three years of the individual's last 14 interaction with the company, whichever occurs first. 740 ILCS 14/15(a). 15 19. The BIPA also prohibits private entities from disclosing a person's or customer's 16 biometric identifier or biometric information to third parties without first obtaining consent for 17 that disclosure, 740 ILCS 14/15(d)(1), and further prohibits selling, leasing, trading, or otherwise 18 profiting from a person's biometric identifiers or biometric information, 740 ILCS 14/15(c). 19 20. "Biometric identifiers" include retina and iris scans, voiceprints, scans of hand 20 and fingerprints, and—most importantly here—face geometry. See 740 ILCS 14/10. "Biometric 21 information" is separately defined to include any information based on an individual's biometric 22 identifier that is used to identify an individual. See id. 23 21. The BIPA's narrowly tailored provisions place no absolute bar on the collection, 24 sending, transmitting, or storing of biometric data. For example, the BIPA does not limit what 25 kinds of biometric data may be collected, sent, transmitted, or stored. Nor does the BIPA limit to 26 whom biometric data may be sent or transmitted, or by whom it may be stored. The BIPA simply 27

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mandates that entities wishing to engage in that conduct must make proper disclosures, implement certain reasonable safeguards, and procure a user's consent before collecting biometric data.

III. AWS Violates the BIPA.

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- 22. Despite the BIPA being in force for over a decade, AWS operates a major biometric-based facial recognition platform in violation of the BIPA's simple requirements.
- 23. Amazon Rekognition is a cloud-based service that, according to Amazon, makes it easy for its customers—from startups to leading corporations—to add image and video analysis, all performed by AWS through its Rekognition platform, to their applications, products, and services. To use its service, an AWS customer just needs to provide AWS an image or video, and then Rekognition can identify objects, people, text, scenes, and activities within the images or video. Amazon even boasts that Rekognition provides facial analysis, face comparison, and face search capabilities, including detecting, analyzing, and comparing faces for a wide variety of use cases, including user verification, cataloging, and people counting. *See* Figures 1 and 2 below, showing screenshots from Amazon's AWS marketing materials.

Face compare and search

Determine the similarity of a face against another picture or from your private image repository.

Learn more »

Female
100%

Eyes are open
100%

Happy
97.4%
Smiling
100%

Face detection and analysis

Detect faces appearing in images and videos and recognize attributes such as open eyes, glasses, and facial hair for each.

Learn more »

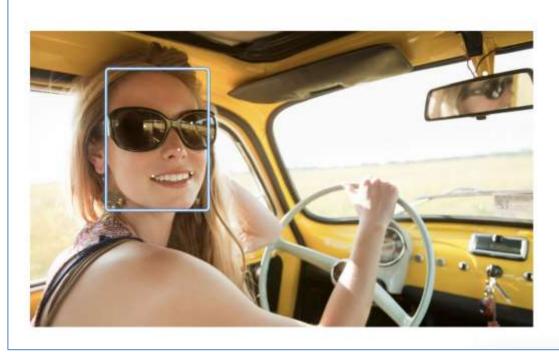
(<u>Figure 1.</u>)

Detecting and analyzing faces

PDF RSS

Amazon Rekognition can detect faces in images and videos. This section covers non-storage operations for analyzing faces. With Amazon Rekognition, you can get information about where faces are detected in an image or video, facial landmarks such as the position of eyes, and detected emotions (for example, appearing happy or sad). You can also compare a face in an image with faces detected in another image.

When you provide an image that contains a face, Amazon Rekognition detects the face in the image, analyzes the facial attributes of the face, and then returns a percent confidence score for the face and the facial attributes that are detected in the image.



(<u>Figure 2.</u>)

24. Using Amazon Rekognition to perform facial recognition is simple. Anyone seeking to perform facial recognition using Rekognition will first need to sign up for an AWS account. *See* Figure 3, showing a screenshot of Amazon's AWS website.

English +

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Sign In

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Create an AWS Account

Contact Us Support *

FAQs

Pricing

Overview

Gain free, hands-on experience with the AWS

AWS Free Tier

platform, products, and services

Account

Types of offers

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our offers.

aws

Products Solutions

AWS Free Tier

25. An AWS customer could then register for and use Rekognition. *See* Figure 4, showing a screenshot of the Rekognition homepage.

Explore more than 100 products and start building on AWS using the Free Tier. Three different types of free offers are available depending on the product used. Click icon below to explore



(Figure 4.)

1	26. After getting "started" with an Amazon Rekognition account, an AWS customer	
2	will need to install and configure AWS's Command Line Interface ("CLI") and Software	
3	Development Kit ("SDK"), which are programming toolkits that allow customers to manage and	
4	use their AWS services.	
5	27. Once the AWS CLI and SDKs are set up and configured, an AWS customer can	
6	start interacting with and using Rekognition.	
7	28. To start, a typical AWS customer will configure their applications or services to	
8	upload images to AWS's cloud-based storage solution, called "S3" or "S3 buckets" (a "bucket"	
9	typically refers to a discrete instance of an S3 cloud storage container).	
10	29. Next, the AWS customer would run a command within the Amazon API (or	
11	Application Programming Interface) interface called "index-faces" on the images it wishes to	
12	compare. This command instructs Rekognition to detect and scan faces in images. Rekognition	
13	then accesses the relevant images and uses its machine vision algorithms to extract the facial	
14	geometry of the individuals pictured into a feature vector. These feature vectors include precise	
15	coordinates describing essential facial landmarks such as the nose, corners of the mouth, eyes,	
16	chin, pupils, and jawline, among others.	
17	30. The feature vectors of facial geometry, as well as higher-order details such as	
18	whether a person is smiling, sad, or disgusted, or is wearing eyeglasses or sunglasses, are then	
19	stored in an AWS backend database called a Rekognition "collection." See Figure 5 below,	
20	showing a screenshot of the Rekognition CLI listing a stored face from a "collection."	
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(Figure 5.)

31. Finally, the AWS customer would then use Rekognition to run a face matching API command. For example, the customer could take the unique "FaceId" that index-faces assigned to a photo of a government identification card and search a collection to see if a matching self-portrait exists. If a match is found, the unique ID of that image is returned along with some data about the face, as well as a "Similarity" score, which is a confidence measurement to indicate how strongly Rekognition believes these faces match. *See* Figure 6, showing a screenshot of the Rekognition CLI.

- 32. All of this time, the AWS customer would be communicating with AWS's servers, where this information is stored and processed.
- 33. One such company that uses Rekognition is ProctorU Inc., which develops and licenses online test proctoring software for use by students and educational facilities.
- 34. When a student takes a test using ProctorU's proctoring software, ProctorU requires students to show their faces and their photo IDs on camera to help verify their identities. *See* Figure 7, showing a screenshot of ProctorU's software.



(<u>Figure 7.</u>)

35. Unbeknownst to students in this example, when they upload their images to ProctorU, they are also uploading their photos to ProctorU's cloud-service provider, AWS. AWS then uses Rekognition to perform facial recognition on the student's face and provided identification card to identify the student. In other words, when students sign in to ProctorU to take a test, their biometric data is also collected by AWS in order to identify the student for ProctorU.

1	36.	By and through the actions detailed above, AWS not only disregards consumers'
2	privacy rights, but it also violates their statutorily protected rights to control the collection, use,	
3	and storage of their sensitive biometric data.	
4	IV. Plair	ntiff Dorian's Experience.
5	37.	In 2020, Plaintiff Jacinda Dorian was a student at Columbia College and Harold
6	Washington	College, both located in Chicago, Illinois.
7	38.	Plaintiff Dorian took multiple tests at both institutions between 2017 and 2019,
8	each requiring the use of ProctorU's software.	
9	39.	During that time, Plaintiff Dorian was required to submit her image as well as an
10	image of a valid identification document in order to be identified.	
11	40.	Unbeknownst to Dorian, ProctorU used Amazon Rekognition to perform facial
12	recognition on her.	
13	41.	At no time did Plaintiff Dorian receive notice from AWS, whether through
14	ProctorU or	otherwise, that AWS was collecting, storing, and using her biometric data.
15	42.	At no time was Plaintiff Dorian asked for, nor at any time did she provide consen
16	for AWS to	collect, store, or use her biometric data.
17	43.	Upon information and belief, at no time while possessing Plaintiff Dorain's
18	biometric data did Amazon maintain a publicly-available retention and deletion schedule for	
19	biometric da	ta.
20		CLASS ALLEGATIONS
21	44.	Class Definition: Plaintiff Dorian brings this on behalf of herself and a class
22	defined as fo	ollows:
2324		All Illinois residents who had their biometric information or biometric identifiers collected, captured, received, possessed, or otherwise obtained by Amazon's Rekognition service and stored in AWS's servers.
25	The following people are excluded from the Class: (1) any Judge or Magistrate presiding over	
26	this action and members of their families; (2) Defendant, Defendant's subsidiaries, parents,	
27	successors, p	predecessors, and any entity in which the Defendant or its parents have a controlling

- 48. Adequate Representation: Plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the Class and has retained counsel competent and experienced in complex litigation and class actions. Plaintiff has no interests antagonistic to those of the Class, and Defendant has no defenses unique to Plaintiff. Plaintiff and her counsel are committed to vigorously prosecuting this action on behalf of the members of the Class and have the financial resources to do so. Neither Plaintiff nor her counsel has any interest adverse to those of the other members of the Class.
- 49. **Policies Generally Applicable to the Class**: This class action is appropriate for certification because Defendant has acted or refused to act on grounds generally applicable to the Class as a whole, thereby requiring the Court's imposition of uniform relief to ensure compatible standards of conduct toward the members of the Class and making final injunctive relief appropriate with respect to the Class as a whole. Defendant's policies that Plaintiff challenges apply and affect members of the Class uniformly, and Plaintiff's challenge of these policies hinges on Defendant's conduct with respect to the Class as a whole, not on facts or law applicable only to Plaintiff. The factual and legal bases of Defendant's liability to Plaintiff and to the other members of the Class are the same.
- 50. **Superiority**: This case is also appropriate for certification because class proceedings are superior to all other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy. The harm suffered by the individual members of the Class is likely to have been relatively small compared to the burden and expense of prosecuting individual actions to redress Defendant's wrongful conduct. Absent a class action, it would be difficult if not impossible for the individual members of the Class to obtain effective relief from Defendant. Even if members of the Class themselves could sustain such individual litigation, it would not be preferable to a class action because individual litigation would increase the delay and expense to all parties and the Court and require duplicative consideration of the legal and factual issues presented. By contrast, a class action presents far fewer management difficulties and provides the benefits of single adjudication, economy of scale, and comprehensive supervision by a single Court.

1	Economies o	f time, effort, and expense will be fostered and uniformity of decisions will be
2	ensured.	
3	51.	Plaintiff reserves the right to revise the "Class Allegations" and "Class
4	Definition" b	pased on facts learned through additional investigation and in discovery.
5 6		FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION Violation of 740 ILCS 14/15(a)
7	50	(On behalf of Plaintiff and the Class)
	52.	Plaintiff incorporates the foregoing allegations as if fully set forth herein.
8	53.	Section 15(a) of the BIPA requires that any "private entity in possession of
9	biometric ide	entifiers must develop a written policy, made available to the public, establishing
10	a retention schedule and guidelines for permanently destroying biometric identifiers when the	
11	initial purpose for collecting or obtaining such identifiers has been satisfied or within 3 years	
12	of the individual's last interaction with the private entity, whichever occurs first." 740 ILCS	
13	14/15(a).	
14	54.	AWS fails to comply with these BIPA mandates.
15	55.	AWS is a corporation and thus qualifies as a "private entity" under the BIPA. See
16	740 ILCS 14	/10.
17	56.	Plaintiff and the Class are individuals who had their "biometric identifiers"
18	collected by	AWS (in the form of their facial scans), as explained in detail in Section III. See 740
19	ILCS 14/10.	
20	57.	Plaintiff's and the Class's biometric identifiers or information based on those
21	biometric identifiers were used to identify them, constituting "biometric information" as defined	
22	by BIPA. See 740 ILCS 14/10.	
23	58.	On information and belief, AWS failed to publicly provide a retention schedule or
24	guideline for	permanently destroying Plaintiff's and the Class's biometric identifiers and
25	biometric information, in violation of 740 ILCS 14/15(a).	
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- 59. By collecting, storing, and possessing Plaintiff's and the Class's biometric identifiers and biometric information as described herein, AWS violated Plaintiff's and the Class's rights to privacy in their biometric identifiers or biometric information as set forth in BIPA, 740 ILCS 14/1, *et seq*.
- 60. Accordingly, on behalf of herself and the Class, Plaintiff seeks: (i) injunctive and equitable relief as is necessary to protect the interests of Plaintiff and the Class by requiring AWS to establish and make publicly available a policy for the permanent destruction of biometric identifiers compliant with 740 ILCS 14/15(a); (ii) statutory damages of \$5,000 per intentional and/or reckless violation of the BIPA pursuant to 740 ILCS 14/20(2) or, in the alternative, statutory damages of \$1,000 per negligent violation of the BIPA pursuant to 740 ILCS 14/20(1); and (iii) reasonable attorneys' fees and costs and other litigation expenses pursuant to 740 ILCS 14/20(3).

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION Violation of 740 ILCS 14/15(b) (On behalf of Plaintiff and the Class)

- 61. Plaintiff incorporates the foregoing allegations as if fully set forth herein.
- 62. The BIPA requires companies to obtain informed written consent from individuals before acquiring their biometric data. Specifically, BIPA makes it unlawful for any private entity to "collect, capture, purchase, receive through trade, or otherwise obtain a person's or a customer's biometric identifiers or biometric information, unless [the entity] first: (1) informs the subject ... in writing that a biometric identifier or biometric information is being collected or stored; (2) informs the subject ... in writing of the specific purpose and length of term for which a biometric identifier or biometric information is being collected, stored, and used; *and* (3) receives a written release executed by the subject of the biometric identifier or biometric information..." 740 ILCS 14/15(b) (emphasis added).
 - 63. Unfortunately, AWS fails to comply with these BIPA mandates.

1	64.	AWS is a corporation and thus qualifies as a "private entity" under the BIPA. See	
2	740 ILCS 14/10.		
3	65.	Plaintiff and the Class are individuals who had their "biometric identifiers"	
4	collected by A	WS (in the form of their facial scans), as explained in detail in Section III. See 740	
5	ILCS 14/10.		
6	66.	Plaintiff's and the Class's biometric identifiers or information based on those	
7	biometric iden	tifiers were used to identify them, constituting "biometric information" as defined	
8	by BIPA. See 740 ILCS 14/10.		
9	67.	AWS violated 740 ILCS 14/15(b)(3) by failing to obtain written releases from	
10	Plaintiff and the Class before it collected, used, and stored their biometric identifiers and		
11	biometric information.		
12	68.	AWS violated 740 ILCS 14/15(b)(1) by failing to inform Plaintiff and the Class in	
13	writing that their biometric identifiers and biometric information were being collected and		
14	stored.		
15	69.	AWS violated 740 ILCS 14/15(b)(2) by failing to inform Plaintiff and the Class in	
16	writing of the	specific purpose and length of term for which their biometric identifiers or	
17	biometric information was were being collected, stored, and used.		
18	70.	By collecting, storing, and using Plaintiff's and the Class's biometric identifiers	
19	and biometric information as described herein, AWS violated Plaintiff's and the Class's rights to		
20	privacy in their biometric identifiers or biometric information as set forth in BIPA, 740 ILCS		
21	14/1, et seq.		
22	71.	On behalf of herself and the Class, Plaintiff seeks: (1) injunctive and equitable	
23	relief as is necessary to protect the interests of Plaintiff and the Class by requiring Defendant to		
24	comply with BIPA's requirements for the collection, storage, and use of biometric identifiers an		
25	biometric information as described herein; (2) liquidated damages of \$5,000 for each intentional		
26	and/or reckless violation of BIPA pursuant to 740 ILCS 14/20(2) or, in the alternative, liquidated		

1	damages of \$1,000 for each negligent violation of BIPA pursuant to 740 ILCS 14/20(1); and (3)		
2	reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses pursuant to 740 ILCS 14/20(3).		
3	PRAYER FOR RELIEF		
4	Plaintiff Jacinda Dorian, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated,		
5	respectfully	requests that this Court enter an Order:	
6	a)	Certifying this case as a class action on behalf of the Class defined above,	
7	appointing J	acinda Dorian as representative of the Class, and appointing her counsel as class	
8	counsel;		
9	b)	Declaring that Defendant's conduct, as set out above, violates the BIPA;	
10	c)	Awarding statutory damages of \$5,000 for each willful and/or reckless violation	
11	of BIPA pursuant to 740 ILCS 14/20(2) or, in the alternative, statutory damages of \$1,000 for		
12	each neglige	ent violation of BIPA pursuant to 740 ILCS 14/20(1);	
13	d)	Awarding injunctive and other equitable relief as is necessary to protect the	
14	interests of t	he Class, including an Order requiring Defendant to comply with BIPA;	
15	e)	Awarding Plaintiff and the Class their reasonable litigation expenses and	
16	attorneys' fe	res;	
17	f)	Awarding Plaintiff and the Class pre- and post-judgment interest, to the extent	
18	allowable; a	nd	
19	g)	Awarding such other and further relief as equity and justice may require.	
20		JURY DEMAND	
21	Plain	tiff requests a trial by jury of all claims that can be so tried.	
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1	Dated: March 7, 2022	Respectfully Submitted,
2		JACINDA DORIAN , individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated,
3		By: /s/ Wright A. Noel
4		
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